

Grade 10 Overview

Focus: Respecting the Views and Beliefs of Others

This unit helps students to understand the importance of respecting the views and beliefs of others. The lessons in this unit focus on the development of specific skills, such as distinguishing between factual claims and opinions, and the ability to listen respectfully to others, even when they are expressing opinions that are different from your own. Lessons also examine the freedom of speech and freedom of religion provisions of the Indiana Constitution and emphasize the idea that citizens of a democracy must learn how to carry on civil discussions of important issues.

Key Ideas:

- The opinions of each person should be respected whether or not one is in agreement with those ideas.
- When there are differences of opinion, it is important to respectfully disagree.
- The civil discussion of differences of opinion is essential to a democracy.

Key Connections to Citizenship Education:

Good citizens:

- treat others the way they would want to be treated.
- respect themselves.
- respect the rights of others to have their own views and religious beliefs.
- respect the Constitution of the State of Indiana.

Lessons:

1. *Separating Fact and Opinion*
2. *Listening to Differing Opinions*
3. *Respecting the Views of Others*
4. *Respecting the Religious Beliefs of Others*

Culminating Activity:

As a culminating project, students might organize a formal discussion or debate on a topic of interest to students and members of the local community. Students might develop their own format for this discussion or use a format that has already been developed, such as the debate format used by Indiana Close Up. (See the Resources section of this guide.) Students might present this discussion in the classroom or demonstrate their civic discussion skills for other classes or the entire school in an assembly. Invitations to attend might be extended to parents and other community members.

Curriculum Connections:

Activities in this unit will help students to attain academic standards in:

Social Studies (Civics and United States Government)

Civic Ideals and Practice - Students will:

Develop a commitment to the civic values needed to function responsibly in a democratic society.

- explain the rights and responsibilities of a citizen.
- understand the relationship of rights to each other and to other values and interests of society.
- demonstrate respect for differences of opinion.
- clearly articulate views and interests.

English/Language Arts (Grades 9-12) - Students will:

- distinguish between objective and subjective presentations of information and events.
- work collaboratively to generate ideas and solve problems.
- express and substantiate their own ideas.
- participate in formal and informal debates.

Grade 10 Lesson One

Separating Fact and Opinion

This lesson helps students distinguish between factual claims, which can be either verified or proven untrue, and statements of opinion and emphasizes the importance of respect for the views and beliefs of others.

Curriculum Connections:

English/Language Arts and Social Studies (Civics and United States Government)

Key Ideas:

- Each person should be respected even when holding different views or opinions.
- When there are differences of opinion, it is important to respectfully disagree.
- The civil discussion of differences of opinion is essential to a democracy.

Key Connections to Citizenship Education:

Good citizens:

- treat others the way one would want to be treated.
- respect themselves.
- respect the rights of others to have their own views and religious beliefs.

Objectives:

Students will:

- describe the difference between a factual statement or claim and an opinion.
- use the definitions of factual claims and opinions to identify factual claims and opinions in conversations.
- demonstrate appropriate ways of respectfully disagreeing with another's opinion.

Introductory Activity:

Ask students if they can separate facts from opinions. In order to learn to respect the opinions of others, it is crucial that students learn to recognize statements of opinions as opposed to factual claims. Use the following as an introductory exercise for this important skill:

Fact or Opinion?

Definitions: *Factual Claims* can be determined to be true or false through examination of data. *Opinions* are subjective statements that cannot be determined to be true or false.

Write *Factual Claim* after a statement that can be determined to be true or false.

Write *Opinion* after a subjective statement.

Do not try to determine whether the statement is true or false, but only whether it is a factual claim or an opinion.

1. Abraham Lincoln is the greatest figure in Indiana history. (Opinion)
2. Indiana exports large amounts of agricultural products. (Factual Claim)
3. The Indiana State Fair is the best state fair in the Midwest. (Opinion)
4. The first capital of the state of Indiana was Madison. (Factual Claim)
5. Gary is northeast of Richmond. (Factual claim)
6. Purdue has a better sports program than either IU or Notre Dame. (Opinion)
7. Life in Indiana has never been better than today. (Opinion)
8. The most beautiful part of Indiana is along the Ohio River. (Opinion)
9. Agriculture is more important to Indiana than industry. (Opinion)
10. Indiana is more rural than urban. (Factual Claim)
11. The National Road (U.S. 40) runs through the middle of Indiana. (Factual Claim.)
12. When it comes to sports in Indiana, basketball is king. (Opinion)

Core Activities:

1. Discuss answers to the introductory quiz, clarifying which items are factual claims and which are opinions.
2. Ask student to work with a partner to write three factual claims or statements and three statements of opinion. Collect the statements and discuss them.
3. Have students respond to the following scenarios:
 - a. Two friends are in a heated argument. You recognize that they are arguing over a factual claim. What would you recommend to resolve the argument?
 - b. Two friends are arguing over a statement of opinion. What do you recommend ?
4. Discuss how these two situations differ. Which argument is easier to resolve? What happens when factual claims are treated as statements of opinion? What happens when statements of opinion are treated as factual claims?

5. Discuss the following statements. In what situations might they be helpful?
 - a. “I understand that is your opinion, but I respectfully disagree.”
 - b. “I believe that you are sincere in your opinion, but I still disagree.”
 - c. “We really don’t have to argue about this. We can look up the information and settle it.
 - d. “I respect your opinion, but here are the reasons that I disagree.”
6. It is important for students to understand that there are frequent differences of opinion regarding important issues in a democratic society like ours. Engage students in the following questions: Is a difference of opinion always a negative thing? When can a difference of opinion be helpful? What conditions need to be present for a difference of opinion to be constructive?
7. In groups of two, have students write their own scenarios, in which there is a difference of opinion, and develop the appropriate dialogue for a respectful discussion. Have teams model their completed scenarios and dialogues for the class.

Additional Ideas:

1. Examine letters to the editor in the local newspaper. Ask students to list opinions and factual claims found in the letters.
2. Research each of the factual claims in the introductory quiz to determine if they are true or false.
3. Compose a letter to the editor in regard to a local issue. The letter should contain at least two factual claims and two opinions.

Evaluation/Assessment:

Evaluate student scenarios and dialogues on the basis of specific criteria that have been discussed with students in advance. For example: Is the issue in dispute clearly identified? Do both parties have an opportunity to state their views? Do students show respect for each other’s opinion?

Resources:

- Local newspapers



Grade 10 Lesson Two

Listening to Differing Opinions

This lesson focuses on a skill that is essential to civil discussion, the ability to listen respectfully to others, even if you do not agree with their opinions.

Curriculum Connections:

English/Language Arts, and Social Studies (Civics, United States Government, and all classes where discussion strategies are used)

Key Idea:

- Each person should be respected even when holding different views or opinions.

Key Connections to Citizenship Education:

Good citizens:

- treat others the way they would want to be treated.
- respect themselves.
- respect the rights of others to have their own views and religious beliefs.

Objectives:

Students will:

- listen carefully to opinions stated by others.
- respect the right of others to hold opinions that are different from their own.

Introductory Activity:

Ask five students to come to the front of the room. Begin a discussion on some current community issue. The five students have 30 seconds to share their opinion on this topic. The unusual thing is that all five have been instructed to speak at once. Tell them when to start and time them. Afterwards, find out if anyone can remember the opinions expressed by any of the students. Allow everyone in class to have this experience by breaking into small groups of three to five students. Everyone in each group has 30 seconds to express an opinion with everyone talking at once. After time has been called, debrief the group using the following questions: What is the problem here? Is this the way we sometimes attempt to communicate? Does it work?

Core Activities:

1. Structure a class discussion in which all may participate using the “Council” format. Pick a topic of current interest in the school or community. Students should sit in one large circle. A “talking stick” is given to the first student who wishes to express an opinion. Guidelines are to state honest opinions in no more than one minute and then to pass the talking stick to the next person. No one may talk, interrupt, or contradict unless it is his or her turn to hold the stick. This rule should be rigorously enforced.
2. After the Council activity has been completed, conduct a general discussion about the topic to hear any final comments and reach any general conclusions.
3. Debrief students on the discussion to examine how hard it was to listen to differing opinions in the Council format. Find out how students felt about not being able to blurt out responses to the opinions being expressed. Ask the following questions: Was it easy or hard to wait for the talking stick? Did some opinions make you upset? What did you do? Did this format promote better listening? How important is it to listen carefully to the opinions of others before we respond?
4. Continue the same discussion or start discussing a new topic using the following guidelines: Whoever wants to speak next in the discussion must briefly restate the opinion of the previous speaker before proceeding. Debrief the class regarding whether this guideline promoted more respect for the opinions of others.

Additional Ideas:

1. As a class, visit a meeting of a local governing body to learn how discussion of issues is carried out and public participation is insured. Students should take responsibility for preparing for this experience by writing to the leaders of the organization and studying its procedures in advance.
2. Carry out an organized classroom discussion of specific issues using a prepared format and background information. (See Resources below.)

Evaluation/Assessment:

Set up a new discussion on another day in which the students set up the ground rules to discuss an issue. Evaluate student participation in the discussion on the basis of the following:

1. The conversation was civil.
2. Everyone who wished to speak had the opportunity to be heard.
3. Various opinions were expressed.
4. Opposing views were respected.

Home Connections:

Invite parents or other community members to visit the class and describe the guidelines for discussion of issues in any organization to which they belong. Individual students might attend a meeting of a local organization to learn about the provisions that are made to insure civil public discussion.

Resources:

- The “Council” discussion format may have its origin in Native American discussion practices, specifically in the traditions of the Iroquois League, which permitted representatives to its “Council of Fifty” to speak until they had completed their thoughts without interruptions. (See: Sahr, David E. *Social Education*, “Native American Governments in Today’s Curriculum”. Washington, D.C.: National Council for the Social Studies, October, 1997, pp 309-315.)

Use of the “Council” format as a teaching strategy is referenced in Evans, R. and D. W. Saxe. *Handbook on Teaching Social Issues*, NCSS Bulletin 93. Washington, D.C.: National Council for the Social Studies, 1996, p. 86.

- There are a number of programs that offer a specific public discussion format and background materials. They include *Indiana Close Up*, a discussion of issues related to the Indiana Constitution, sponsored by the Indiana Historical Bureau, 140 North Senate Avenue, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204.

Grade 10 Lesson Three

Respecting the Views of Others

This lesson helps students to understand that respect for the views and beliefs of others is an important part of our democracy. When viewpoints differ, effective citizens engage in civil discussion.

Curriculum Connections:

English/Language Arts and Social Studies (Civics, Indiana Studies, United States Government)

Key Ideas:

- The opinions of each person should be respected whether or not one is in agreement with those ideas.
- Public debate and discussion are important parts of the American tradition.

Key Connections to Citizenship Education:

Good citizens:

- treat others the way they would want to be treated.
- respect the rights of others to have their own views and religious beliefs.
- respect the Constitution of the State of Indiana.

Objectives:

Students will:

- describe the support found in the Indiana Constitution for each individual's right to freedom of thought and opinion.
- demonstrate respect for the views and opinions of others.
- practice conversation skills that contribute to civil discussion.

Introductory Activity:

Ask students if they ever really got upset after listening to someone's opinion. Did they argue with the person? What happened? Write on the board or the overhead the following section of the *Constitution of the State of Indiana* (1851).

Article 1, Section 9. [Right to free thought, speech, writing and printing; **Abuse of right**]. No law shall be passed, restraining the free interchange of thought and opinion, or restricting the right to speak, write, or print, freely, on any subject whatever: but for the abuse of that right, every person shall be responsible.

Discuss what this section means for opinions different from our own.

Core Activities:

1. Ask students why people become involved in discussions and arguments at all. Why do they engage in discussion? Do they like to argue? Why?
2. Three purposes for expressing opinions are: a) to persuade; b) to express feelings; and c) to clarify points of view. Ask students for examples of each from conversations they have had recently:
 - a. Persuading and winning - for people who want to convince other people about their point of view.
 - b. Expressing feelings - for people who want a sympathetic audience or just need to get some things "off their chest."
 - c. Clarifying of opposing points of view and problem-solving - for people trying to clarify and solve a problem.
3. Ask which of three purposes fits the following conversation:

Joe: You know, Bill, there's no better football team than the Chicago Bears.

Bill: Coming from the Chicago area, I can see how you'd feel that way, Joe. But there are a lot of good teams.

Joe: Well, everybody I know is crazy about "da Bears." They are just great! Playing outdoors at Soldier Field . . . that's real football! It takes a strong team. You don't really think Indiana has anything to compare to that, do you?

Bill: Joe, I guess you've just never had the opportunity to see some of our Indiana teams play. Come visit Indiana next fall, and I'll take you to some great football games.
4. Ask students, in groups of three to four, to write short conversations illustrating each of the three purposes stated above. Then read the conversations to the class to see if they can identify its purpose. More than one purpose is possible.
5. Discuss which of the three purposes is most important in maintaining a democracy. Why? Is respect for different viewpoints essential for a democratic system?

6. Introduce students to strategies for carrying on a civil discussion, with another individual or in a group, where there are opposing points of view and a need for problem-solving. Such strategies include:
 - a. Listening carefully and courteously to another person's point of view;
 - b. Stating the issue or issues in the discussion clearly and identifying points of agreement and disagreement;
 - c. Listing issues that individuals or members of a group agree to discuss;
 - d. Agreeing to disagree on some topics when no agreement is possible in order to take up another issue or topic;
 - e. Reflecting on the quality of the discussion in order to improve discussion skills.
7. Have students work in groups of three or four to develop a discussion on a specific issue using the civil discussion skills that have been introduced. Students can then present the discussion to the class in the format of their choice, such as a panel discussion, a play, a musical, or a graphic presentation.

Additional Ideas:

1. Help students organize a classroom discussion on an issue of concern in the local community. Students should use local news media and resource persons to research the various positions on this issue, so that they may be presented in the discussion.
2. Research examples in American history of individuals who represented or expressed unpopular viewpoints. What means did these individuals use to make their perspectives heard? What provisions of the United States Constitution relate to these cases? What importance do they have in the present?

Evaluation/Assessment:

1. Ask students to explain, in oral or written form, what the Indiana Constitution says about freedom of speech and how that provision applies to individual thoughts and opinions.
2. Evaluate student group conversations on the basis of how well they reflect the three categories: persuading, expressing feelings, and clarifying opposing points of view.
3. Evaluate student group presentations on the basis of how well they demonstrate civil discussion skills.

Home Connections:

1. Invite a member of the local judiciary, a local newspaper editor, or other members of the news media to visit the class and discuss the Freedom of Speech provision of the Indiana Constitution.
2. At home, students might listen to the local news on radio or television and write down examples of persuading, expressing feelings, and clarifying points of view.

Resources:

- Singleton, Laurel and Giese, James. "Preparing Citizens to Participate in Democratic Discourse." In *Handbook on Teaching Social Issues*. NCSS Bulletin 93. Washington, D. C: National Council for the Social Studies, 1996, pp 59-65.
- *The Declaration of Independence, The Constitution of the United States of America, and The Constitution of the State of Indiana*. Published by the Office of the Attorney General, 402 West Washington Street, Fifth Floor, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204.

Grade 10 Lesson Four

Respecting the Religious Beliefs of Others

This lesson introduces students to provisions of the Indiana Constitution that relate to freedom of religion.

Curriculum Connections:

Social Studies (Civics, United States Government, Indiana Studies, Law Education)

Key Ideas:

- The Indiana Constitution upholds the right to religious freedom.
- Religious differences should be respected.

Key Connections to Citizenship Education:

Good citizens:

- treat others the way they would like to be treated.
- respect the rights of others to have their own views and religious beliefs.
- respect the Constitution of the State of Indiana.

Objectives:

Students will:

- be able to describe the protections for freedom of religion found in the Indiana Constitution.
- be able to apply the constitutional provisions for freedom of religion to real-life situations.

Introductory Activity:

Ask students if they know what kind of religious freedoms they have. Freedom of speech is protected by the Indiana Constitution. Is freedom of religion also protected? In what ways?

Have students read the handout entitled, “Freedom of Religion in the Indiana Constitution.” This can be done silently or orally.

Core Activities:

1. Review the freedom of religion provisions from the handout with students to make sure that every student has a basic understanding of each provision. Clarify any questions that students may have.
2. Introduce the following hypothetical situations or scenarios that raise questions about religious freedom. Have students determine which section of Article I of the Indiana Constitution applies to each scenario. Based on the Constitution, how would each of these situations be resolved?

SCENARIO ONE: Amish people in an Indiana community use horses and buggies on the roads for transportation. This is due to an aspect of their religious beliefs. Other members of the community complain that the buggies slow down traffic and create a hazard. They say that the Amish people should drive cars like everyone else. What does the Indiana Constitution have to say about this situation?

SCENARIO TWO: A potential witness in a court case belongs to a religious group that is very different from other religions in the community. Lawyers argue that the person's "unusual" beliefs should disqualify him as a witness. In view of the freedom of religion provisions of the Indiana Constitution, what should the judge decide?

3. After discussion of the scenarios above, have students work in pairs to write their own scenarios that deal with questions related to freedom of religion. Students then present their scenarios to the class and explain which of the freedom of religion provisions of the Indiana Constitution is applicable.
4. *The Constitution of the State of Indiana* establishes the structure and limits of state government and guarantees certain rights to people. This means that neither the government nor individuals may violate the rights of others. Ask students to consider what this means in terms of our individual conduct and behavior toward others. How can we show respect for the rights of others to have their own views and religious beliefs in our day-to-day behavior? How would each of us want to be treated?

Additional Ideas:

1. Compare the statements in the Indiana Constitution on religion with those in the United States Constitution. How are they similar? How are they different?
2. Read past issues of daily newspapers for real-life situations involving freedom of religion in Indiana. What questions and issues did the articles describe? How does the Indiana Constitution relate to each article?

Evaluation/Assessment:

Students should be able to summarize each of the freedom of religion provisions of the Indiana Constitution in their own words. Student scenarios should be evaluated on the basis of students' ability to identify applicable provisions.

Home Connections:

At home, students might view local and national television news programs over a period of several weeks. If there are news stories relating to religious freedom, students might want to share the information with the class or discuss the stories with their families.

Resources:

- Handout: “Freedom of Religion in the Indiana Constitution,” *The Constitution of the State of Indiana* (1851).
- *The Declaration of Independence, The Constitution of the United States of America and The Constitution of the State of Indiana*. Published by the Office of the Indiana. Attorney General, 402 West Washington Street, Fifth Floor, Indianapolis, Indiana 46204.

Freedom of Religion in the Indiana Constitution
Constitution of the State of Indiana (1851)

ARTICLE 1

Section 2. [Natural right]. All people shall be secured in the natural right to worship ALMIGHTY GOD, according to the dictates of their own consciences. [Amended November 6, 1984].

Section 3. [Freedom of religious opinions and rights of conscience]. No law shall, in any case whatever, control the free exercise and enjoyment of religious opinions, or interfere with the rights of conscience.

Section 4. [Freedom of religion]. No preference shall be given, by law, to any creed, religious society, or mode of worship; and no person shall be compelled to attend, erect, or support, any place of worship, or to maintain any ministry, against his consent. [Amended November 6, 1984].

Section 5. [Religious test for office]. No religious test shall be required as a qualification for any office of trust or profit.

Section 6. [Public money for benefit of religious or theological institutions]. No money shall be drawn from the treasury, for the benefit of any religious or theological institution.

Section 7. [Witness competent regardless of religious opinions]. No person shall be rendered incompetent as a witness, in consequence of his opinions on matters of religion.

Section 8. [Oath, or affirmation, administration]. The mode of administering an oath or affirmation, shall be such as may be most consistent with, and binding upon, the conscience of the person, to whom such oath or affirmation may be administered.